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KING LEAR.

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OF THE

EDWIN FORREST EDITION

OF

Shakspearian and other Plays,

CORRECTLY MARKED, WITH THE KIND PERMISSION OF

THE EMINENT TRAGEDIAN,
FROM HIS OWN PROMPT BOOK,

AND AS ACTED BY HIM IN THE
PRINCIPAL CITIES OF THE UNITED STATES,

Under the Management of

JAMES M. NIXON, ESQ.

The Publishers in presenting this New Edition to the public and profession, deem it a duty to state that they are indebted to EDWIN FORREST, Esq., for not only his kindness in the use of his books, but also that each receives his personal revision in proof, before going to press, consequently they are verbatim as presented.

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PRINTED FOR THE PUBLISHERS,

BY TORREY BROTHERS, 13 SPRUCE ST., N. Y.

AND FOR SALE BY

C. S. BERNARD & Co., OF THE AMERICAN DRAMATIC INSTITUTE,
486 BROADWAY, N. Y.

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1860

The Publishers believing that the want of a strictly correct edition of the Plays of Shakspeare, as they are acted at the present day, which might serve the purpose of mentor and guide, has long been felt by the public, and particularly by the members of the theatrical profession, have endeavored to supply the want, and present this work as the first result of their efforts. It is

RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

TO

EDWIN FORREST, ESQ.

as an humble tribute to the genius of the greatest impersonator and expounder living, of the works of the immortal bard, and a recognition of kindly assistance received from him. In making the corrections and interpolations (from the original text) his knowledge and research were invaluable; and the unusual facility afforded by his private library (the finest Shakspearian in the world) have enabled the Publishers to perfect a work which they can present with confidence to the public.

WM. A. MOORE & C. S. BERNARD.

NEW YORK, 1860.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

KING LEAR.....	MR. FORREST.
DUKE OF BURGUNDY.....	MR. HARRISON.
DUKE OF CORNWALL.....	MR. MORRIS.
DUKE OF ALBANY.....	MR. HARKINS.
DUKE OF GLOSTER.....	MR. CANOLL.
DUKE OF KENT.....	MR. FISHER.
EDGAR.....	MR. CONWAY.
EDMUND.....	MR. DONALDSON.
OSWALD.....	MR. FENNO.
CAPTAIN OF GUARD.....	MR. COOKE.
HERALD.....	MR. TAYLOR.
PHYSICIAN.....	MR. MARTIN.
OLD MAN.....	MR. LEIGH.
FIRST KNIGHT.....	MR. GOULDSON.
SECOND KNIGHT.....	MR. BECKS.
THIRD KNIGHT.....	MR. ELLIS.
GONERIL.....	M' ME PONISI.
REGAN.....	MISS ATHENIA.
CORDELIA.....	MRS. CONWAY
ARONTHE.....	MISS FISHER.

4 Jan 73

KING LEAR

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Anti-chamber in King Lear's Palace.*

Enter EDMUND, R.H.

Edm. Thou, Nature, art my goddess ; to thy law
My services are bound : why am I then
Depriv'd of a son's right, because I came not
In the dull road that custom has prescrib'd ?
Why bastard ? Wherefore base ? when I can boast
A mind as gen'rous, and a shape as true
As honest madam's issue ? Why are we
Held base, who in the lusty stealth of Nature
Take fiercer qualities than what compound
The scanted births of the stale marriage-bed
Well, then, legitimate Edgar, to thy right
Of law I will oppose a bastard's cunning.
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate Edgar ; with success
I've practis'd yet on both their easy natures.—
Here comes the old man, chaf'd with the information
Which last I forg'd against my brother Edgar ;
A tale so plausible, so boldly utter'd,
And heighten'd by such lucky accidents,
That now the slightest circumstance confirms him,
And base-born Edmund, spite of law, inherits.

(Retires a little, R.H.)

Enter KENT and GLOSTER, L.H.

Glost. Nay, good my lord, your charity
O'ershoots itself, to plead in his behalf ;

You are yourself a father, and may feel
 The sting of disobedience from a son
 First-born and best-belov'd.—O, villain Edgar !

Kent. Be not too rash ; all may be forgery,
 And time yet clear the duty of your son.

Glost. Plead with the seas, and reason down the winds,
 Yet shalt thou ne'er convince me : I have seen
 His foul designs through all a father's fondness.

Edm. It works as I could wish ; I'll shew myself.

(Aside, Advances.)

Glost. Ha, (*Crosses to Edmund, R.H.*) Edmund ! welcome, boy.—O Kent ! see here
 Inverted nature, Gloster's shame and glory :
 This bye-born, the wild sally of my youth,
 Pursues me with all filial offices ;
 Whilst Edgar, begged of heaven, and born in honor,
 Draws plagues upon my head, that urge me still
 To curse in age the pleasure of my youth.
 Nay, weep not, Edmund, for thy brother's crimes.
 O gen'rous boy ! thou shar'st but half his blood,
 Yet lov'st beyond the kindness of a brother ;
 But I'll reward thy virtue. Follow me.
 My lord, you wait the king, who comes resolv'd
 To quit the toils of empire, and divide
 His realms amongst his daughters. Heaven succeed it !
 But much I fear the change.

Kent. I grieve to see him
 With such wild starts of passion hourly seiz'd,
 As render majesty beneath itself.

Glost. Alas ! 'tis the infirmity of his age :
 Yet has his temper ever been unfixt,
 Chol'ric, and sudden.

(Flourish of Trumpets and Drums, R.H.)
 Hark, they approach. *[Flourish.—Exeunt, R.H.]*

Enter CORDELIA, L.H. EDGAR, following.

Edg. Cordelia, royal fair, turn yet once more,
 And, ere successful Burgundy receive
 The treasure of thy beauties from the king,
 Ere happy Burgundy for ever fold thee,
 Cast back one pitying look on wretched Edgar.

Cord. Alas ! what would the wretched Edgar with
The more unfortunate Cordelia ?
Who, in obedience to a father's will,
Flies from her Edgar's arms to Burgundy's.

(*A Flourish sounds and continues until the Scene changes.*)

[*Exeunt ; Cordelia, R.H., and Edgar, L.H.*

SCENE II.—*A Room of State in the Palace.*

(*Flourish of Drums and Trumpets, R.H.*)

KING LEAR upon his Throne, ALBANY, CORNWALL, BURGUNDY, KENT, GLOSTER, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, Captain of the Guard, three Knights, two Pages, two Gentlemen with the Map, two Gentlemen with the Crown, Physician, Herald, Banners and Guards, Lords, Ladies, &c., &c., discovered.

Lear. Attend, my lords of Albany and Cornwall,
With princely Burgundy.

Alb. We do, my liege.

Lear. Give me the map.—(*The Gentlemen who hold the Map, L.H., advance a little, and unroll it.*)—Know, lords, we have divided,

In three our kingdom, having now resolv'd
To disengage from our long toil of state,
Conferring all upon your younger years.
You, Burgundy, Cornwall, and Albany,
Long in our court have made your amorous sojourn,
And now are to be answered.—Tell me, my daughters,
Which of you loves us most, that we may place
Our largest bounty with the largest merit.
Goneril, our eldest born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I do love you more than words can utter,
Beyond what can be valu'd rich or rare ;
Nor liberty, nor sight, health, fame, or beauty,
Are half so dear ; my life for you were vile ;
As much as child can love the best of fathers.

Lear. Of all these bounds, e'en from this line to this,
With shady forests, and wide skirted meads,
We make thee lady ; to thine and Albany's issue

Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter, Regan, wife to Cornwall ?

Reg. My sister, sir, in part, exprest my love ; For such as her's, is mine, though more extended ; Sense has no other joy that I can relish ; I have my all in my dear lieges love.

Lear. Therefore, to thee and thine hereditary, Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom.

(*Whilst Cordelia is speaking, Lear, assisted by Kent, L.H., and Gloster, R.H., descends from the throne and comes forward into the centre ; Kent goes below Burgundy, L.H., and Gloster remains at Lear's R.H., a little behind him.*)

Cord. Now comes my trial.—How am I distrest, That must with cold speech tempt the chol'ric king, Rather to leave me dowerless, than to condemn me To Burgundy's embraces.

(*Aside.*)

Lear. Speak now, our last, not least in our dear love,— So ends my task of state,—Cordelia, speak : What canst thou say to win a richer third, Than what thy sisters gained ?

Cord. Now must my love, in words, fall short of their's, As much as it exceeds in truth—(*Aside.*)—Nothing, my lord,

Lear. Nothing ?

Cord. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing ; speak again.

Cord. Unhappy am I that I can't dissemble : Sir, as I ought, I love your majesty, No more, nor less.

Lear. Take heed, Cordelia ; Thy fortunes are at stake ; think better on't, And mend thy speech a little.

Cord. O my liege !

You gave me being, bred me, dearly loved me, And I return my duty as I ought, Obey you, love you, and most honor you. Why have my sisters husbands, if they love you all ? Happly when I shall wed, the lord, whose hand Shall take my plight, will carry half my love ; For I shall never marry like my sisters, To love my father all.

Lear. And goes thy heart with this ?
 'Tis said that I am chol'ric. Judge me, gods,
 Is there not cause ? Now, minion, I perceive
 The truth of what has been suggested to us,
 Thy fondness for the rebel son of Gloster.—
 And oh ! take heed, rash girl, lest we comply
 With thy fond wishes, which thou wilt too late
 Repent ; for know, our nature cannot brook
 A child so young, and so ungentle.

Cord. So young, my lord, and true.

Lear. Thy truth then be thy dower :
 For, by the sacred Sun, and solemn Night,
 I here disclaim all my paternal care,
 And from this minute hold thee as a stranger
 Both to my blood and favor.

Kent. This is frenzy.

Consider, good my liege,—

Lear. Peace, Kent !
 Come not between a dragon and his rage.
 I lov'd her most, and in her tender trust
 Design'd to have bestow'd mine age at ease.
 So be my grave my peace, as here I give
 My heart from her, and with it all my wealth !

(*Lear goes to Albany and Cornwall, and beckons the Gentlemen who hold the Crown* R. H. *They advance a little towards the King.*)

My lords of Cornwall and of Albany,
 I do invest you jointly with full right
 In this fair third, Cordelia's forfeit dow'r.
 Mark me, my lords, observe our last resolve ;
 Our self, attended by an hundred knights,
 Will make abode with you in monthly course ;
 The name alone of king remain with me,
 Yours be the execution and revenues.
 This is our final will ; and to confirm it,
 This coronet part between you

Kent. (Kneels.) Royal Lear,
 Whom I have ever honor'd as my king,
 Lov'd as my father, as my master follow'd,
 And, as my patron, thought on in my pray'rs.—

Lear. Away ! the bow is bent, make from the shaft.

Kent. (Rises.) No, let it fall, and drench within my heart :

Be Kent unmannerly when Lear is mad ;

Thy youngest daughter—

Lear. On thy life no more.

Kent. What wilt thou do, old man ?

Lear. Out of my sight.

Kent. See better first.

Lear. Now by the gods—

Kent. Now, by the gods, rash king, thou swear'st in vain.

(*Lear, attempting to draw his sword, is prevented by Albany, who advances and lays his hand on the King's left arm, and by Gloster, who advances and lays his hand on the King's right arm*)

Lear. Ha, traitor !

Kent. Do, kill thy physician Lear ;

Strike thro' my throat ; yet with my latest breath

I'll thunder in thine ear my just complaint,

And tell thee to thy face that thou dost ill.

Lear. Hear me, rash man ! on thine allegiance hear me

(*Lear sheathes his half-drawn sword ; Albany and Gloster retire to their places*)

Since thou hast striven to make us break our vow,

And prest between our sentence and our pow'r,

Which nor our nature, nor our place can bear,

We banish thee for ever from our sight

And kingdom : If, when three days are expir'd,

Thy hated trunk be found in our dominions,

That moment is thy death.—Away !

(*Lear turns from Kent ; and beckoning Goneril, Regan, Albany and Cornwall to him, confers with them in the centre of the stage until Kent is gone.*)

Kent. Why, fare thee well, king : since thou art resolv'd, I take thee at thy word ; I will not stay

To see thy fall. The gods protect thee, maid,

That truly think'st, and hast most justly said.

Thus to new climates my old truth I bear ;

Friendship lives hence, and banishment is here. [Exit, L. H.

Lear. Now, Burgundy, you see her price is fall'n ; Yet, if the fondness of your passion still

Affect her as she stands, dow'rless, and lost
In our esteem, she's yours ; take her or leave her.

Burg. Pardon me, royal Lear, I but demand
The dow'r yourself propos'd, and here I take
Cordelia by the hand, duchess of Burgundy.

Lear. Then leave her, sir ; for, by a father's rage,
I tell you all her wealth.

(*Cordelia throws herself at Lear's feet.*)
Away ! Away ! Away ! (*Flourish of Trumpets, &c.*)
[*Exeunt all but Cordelia,* L.H.

Enter EDGAR, R.H.U.E.

Edg. Has heav'n then weigh'd the merit of my love,
Or is it the raving of a sickly thought ?
Cou'd Burgundy forego so rich a prize,
And leave her to despairing Edgar's arms ?

(*Raises Cordelia.*)
Have I thy hand, Cordelia ? Do I clasp it ?
The hand that was this minute to have join'd
My hated rival's ? Do I kneel before thee,
And offer at thy feet my panting heart ?
Smile, Princess, and convince me ; for, as yet,
I doubt, and dare not trust my dazzling joy.

Cord. Some comfort yet, that 'twas no vicious blot
That has depriv'd me of a father's grace ;
But merely want of that that makes me rich
In wanting it ; a smooth professing tongue.
O sisters ! I am loth to call your fault
As it deserves ; but use our father well,
And wrong'd Cordelia never shall repine.

Edg. O heav'nly maid ! that art thyself thy dow'r,
Richer in virtue than the stars in light,
If Edgar's humble fortunes may be grac'd
With thy acceptance, at thy feet he lays 'em.
Ha ! my Cordelia, dost thou turn away ?
What have I done t'offend thee ?

Cord. Talk'd of love.

Edg. Then I've offended oft ; Cordelia too
Has oft permitted me so to offend.

Cord. When, Edgar, I permitted your addresses,
I was the darling daughter of a King !

Nor can I now forget my royal birth,
 And live dependent on my lover's fortune ;
 I cannot to so low a fate submit ;
 And therefore study to forget your passion,
 And trouble me upon this theme no more. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Edg. Thus majesty takes most state in distress.
 How are we tost on Fortune's fickle flood !
 The wave that with surprising kindness brought
 The dear wreck to my arms, has snatch'd it back,
 And left me mourning on the barren shore.

Cord. This baseness of the ignoble Burgundy
 Draws just suspicion on the race of men ;
 His love was int'rest, so may Edgar's be,
 And he but with more compliment dissemble ;
 If so, I shall oblige him by denying ;
 But, if his love be fix'd, such constant flame
 As warms my breast, if such I find his passion,
 My heart as grateful to his truth shall be,
 And cold Cordelia prove as kind as he. [Exit, R.H.]

Enter EDMUND, hastily, L.H.

Edm. Brother, I've found you in a lucky minute ;
 Fly, and be safe : some villain has incens'd
 Our father against your life.

Edg. Distrest Cordelia !—but oh, more cruel !

Edm. Hear me, sir ; your life, your life's in danger.
 'Wake, 'wake, sir.

Edg. Say you brother ?—

No tears, good Edmund ; if thou bring'st me tidings
 To strike me dead, for charity delay not ;
 That present will befit so kind a hand.

Edm. Your danger, sir, comes on so fast,
 That I want time t'inform you ; but retire,
 Whilst I take care to turn the pressing stream.
 O Gods ! for heaven's sake, sir,—

Edg. Pardon me, Edmund ;
 But you talk'd of danger,
 And wish'd me to retire.—Must all our vows
 End thus ?—Friend, I obey you.—O Cordelia ! [Exit, R.H.]

Edm. Ha ! ha ! Fond man ! Such credulous honesty
 Lessens the glory of my artifice ;

His nature is so far from doing wrongs,
 That he suspects none :—(*Takes out a Letter.*)—If this
 letter speed,
 And pass for Edgar's, as himself would own
 The counterfeit, but for the foul contents,
 Then my designs are perfect.—Here comes Gloster.
 (*Attempts to hide the Letter.*)

Enter GLOSTER, L.H.

Glost. Stay, Edmund, turn ; what paper were you reading ?
Edm. A trifle, sir.

Glost. What needed then that terrible dispatch of it into
 your pocket ? Come, produce it, sir.

Edm. A letter from my brother, sir : I had
 Just broke the seal, but know not the contents :

· (*Gives the Letter to Gloster.*)
 Yet, fearing they might prove to blame,
 Endeavor'd to conceal it from your sight.

Glost. This is Edgar's character.

(*Reads.*)—*This policy of father's is intolerable, that
 keeps our fortunes from us 'till age will not suffer us to en-
 joy them ; I am weary of the tyranny. Come to me, that
 of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I
 waked him, you should enjoy half his possessions, and live
 belov'd of your brother.*

Sleep till I wak'd him, you should enjoy
 Half his possessions !—Edgar to write this
 'Gainst his indulgent father ! Death and hell !

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Fly, Edmund, seek him out ; wind me into him, (1)
 That I may bite the traitor's heart, and fold
 His bleeding entrails on my vengeful arm.

Edm. Perhaps 'twas writ, my lord, to prove my virtue.

Glost. These late eclipses of the sun and moon
 Can bode no less ; love cools, and friendship fails ;
 In cities mutiny, in countries discord ;
 The bond of nature crack'd 'twixt son and father.—
 Find out the villain ; do it carefully,
 And it shall lose thee nothing.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Edm. So, now my project's firm, but, to make sure,

(1) Do me this.

I'll throw in one proof more, and that a bold one ;
 I'll place old Gloster where he shall o'er-hear us
 Confer of this design ; whilst, to his thinking,
 Deluded Edgar shall accuse himself.
 Be honesty my int'rest, and I can
 Be honest too ; and what saint so divine.
 That will successful villainy decline ?

[*Exit, R.H.*

SCENE III.—*The Court before the Duke of Albany's Palace.*

Enter KENT, disguised, L.H.

Kent. Now, banish'd Kent, if thou canst pay thy duty,
 In this disguise, where thou dost stand condemn'd,
 Thy master Lear shall find thee full of labors.

(*Retires a little, R.H.*)

Enter KING LEAR, attended by his Physician and three Knights, L.H.

Lear. In there, and tell our daughter we are here.

[*Exit 1st Knight, R.H.*
 (*Kent advances, R.H.*)

Now, what art thou ?

Kent. A man, sir.

Lear. What dost thou profess, or would'st with us ?

Kent. I do profess to be no less than I seem, to serve him truly that puts me in trust, to love him that's honest, to converse with him that's wise and speaks little, to fight when I can't chose, and to eat no fish.

Lear. I say, what art thou ?

Kent. A very honest-hearted fellow, and as poor as the king.

Lear. If thou be as poor for a subject, as he is for a king, thou art poor enough.—Dost thou know me, fellow ?

Kent. No, sir ; but you have that in your countenance, which I would fain call master.

Lear. What's that ?

Kent. Authority.

Lear. What services canst thou do ?

Kent. I can keep honest counsel, mar a curious tale in the telling, deliver a plain message bluntly ; that which or-

dinary men are fit for, I am qualified in ; and the best of me, is diligence.

Lear. How old art thou ?

Kent. Not so young, sir, to love a woman for singing ; nor so old, to dote on her for any thing ; I have years on my back forty-eight.

Lear. Thy name ?

Kent. Caius.

Lear. Follow me ; thou shalt serve me.

(*Kent goes to R.H. of 2d Knight.*)

Enter OSWALD, L.H., singing, and passing King Lear carelessly.

Now, sir ?

Osw. Sir !—Tol de rol, &c. [Exit singing, R.H.]

Lear. What says the fellow ? call the clodpole back.

[*Exeunt Kent and 2d Knight, R.H.*]

3d Knight. My lord, I know not ; but, methinks, your highness is entertain'd with slender ceremony.

Lear. Say'st thou so ?

Thou but remember'st me of mine own conception.

Re-enter 1st Knight, R.H.

Why came not that slave back when I call'd him ?

1st Knight. My lord, he answer'd i'th' surliest manner, that he would not. (Goes to his former place.)

Lear. I hope our daughter did not so instruct him.

OSWALD brought in by KENT and 2d KNIGHT, R.H. 1st and 2d Knight go behind, L.H.—2d Knight goes to his former place.—Kent puts Oswald next the King.

Now, who am I sir ?

Osw My lady's father.

Lear. My ladies' father ! My lord's knave. (Strikes him.)

Osw. I'll not be struck, my lord.

Kent. Nor tript, neither, you vile civet-box.

(*Trips up his heels.*)

Lear. I thank thee, fellow : thou serv'st me.

Kent. Come, sir, arise, away ; I'll teach you differences.

[*Exit Oswald, crying out, R.H.U.E.*]

(*Kent pursues him with his staff till he is off the stage, then returns to the Knights, L.H.*)

Gon. (Within, R.H.) By day and night ! this is insufferable ; I will not bear it.

Enter GONERIL, R.H., attended by Page and two Ladies.

Lear. Now, daughter, why that frontlet on ?
Speak, does that frown become our presence ?

Gon. Sir, this licentious insolence of your servants
Is most unseemly : hourly they break out
In quarrels, bred by their unbounded riots ;
I had fair hope, by making this known to you,
To have had a quick redress ; but find too late
That you protect and countenance their outrage ;
And therefore, sir, I take this freedom, which
Necessity makes discreet.

Lear. Are you our daughter ?

Gon. Come, sir, let me entreat you to make use
Of your discretion, and put off betimes
This disposition that of late transforms you
From what you rightly are.

Lear. Does any here know me ? Why, this is not Lea. !
Does Lear walk thus ? Speak thus ! Where are his eyes ?
Who is it that can tell me who I am ?
Your name, fair gentlewoman ?

Gon. Come, sir, this admiration's much o'th' savour (1)
Of other your new humors ; I beseech you
To understand my purposes aright ;
As you are old, you should be staid and wise :
Here do you keep an hundred knights and 'squire.
Men so debauch'd and bold, that this our palace
Shews like a riotous inn, a tavern, brothel :
Be then advis'd by her, that else will take
That which she begs, to lessen your attendants ;
Take half away, and see that the remainder
Be such as may befit your age, and know
Themselves and you.

Lear. Darkness and devils !—
Saddle my horses, call my train together.
Degenerate viper !—I'll not stay with thee ;
I yet have left a daughter—Serpent ! Monster !—
Lessen my train, and call 'em riotous !

(1) Of the complexion

All men approv'd, of choice and rarest parts,
 That each particular of duty know.—
 How small, Cordelia, was thy fault ?—O Lear,
 Beat at this gate—(*Strikes his head.*)—that let thy folly in,
 And thy dear judgment out !—Go, go, my people.

Enter ALBANY, L.H.

Ingrateful Duke !—Prepare my horses.—Was this your
 will ?

Who stirs !

[*Exit Knight, L.H.*

Alb. What, sir ?

Lear. Death ! fifty of my followers at a clap ?

Alb. The matter, madam ? (To Goneril.)

Gon. Never afflict yourself to know the cause,
 But give his dotage way.

Lear. Blasts upon thee !

Th' untented woundings of a father's curse
 Pierce every sense about thee !—Old fond eyes,
 Beweep this cause again, I'll pluck ye out,
 And cast ye, with the waters that ye lose,
 To temper clay.—No, Gorgon ;—thou shalt find
 That I'll resume the shape, which thou dost think
 I have cast off for ever.

Gon. Mark ye that ?

Alb. I'm ignorant,—

Lear. It may be so, my lord, (*Lear throws away his
 hat and staff as he falls on his knees.*) .

Hear, nature, hear ;
 Dear goddess, hear ! Suspend thy purpose, if
 Thou did'st intend to make this creature fruitful !
 Into her womb convey sterility !
 Dry up in her the organs of increase ;
 That from her derogate (1) body never spring
 A babe to honor her—If she must teem,
 Create her child of spleen ; that it may live,
 And be a thwart disnatur'd (2) torment to her !
 Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth ;
 With cadant tears fret channels in her cheeks :

(1) Degraded ; blasted.

(2) Wanting natural affection.

Turn all her mother's pains, and benefits, (1)
 To laughter and contempt ; that she may feel,
 How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,
 To have a thankless child ! (Rises) Away, away !

(*Kent and the Physician raise the King and bear him away. The 1st Knight takes up his hat and staff.*)

[*Exeunt King Lear and his Attendants, L.H.—Albany, Goneril and their Attendants, R.H.*

END OF ACT I.



ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Earl of Gloster's Castle.*

Enter EDMUND, L.H.

Edm. The duke comes here to night ; I'll take advantage
 Of this arrival to complete my project.—(*Knocks, M.D.*)
 Brother, a word ; come forth ; it's I, your friend !

Enter EDGAR, M.D. (Comes forward, R.H.)

My father watches for you, fly this place ;
 Intelligence is giv'n where you are hid !
 Take the advantage of the night.—Bethink,
 Have you not spoke against the Duke of Cornwall.
 Something might shew you a favorer of
 Duke Albany's party ?

Edg. Nothing ; why ask you ?

Edm. Because he's coming here to night in haste,
 And Regan with him.

Edg. Let him come on ; I'll stay and clear myself.

Edm. Your innocence at leisure may be heard,
 But Gloster's storming rage as yet is deaf,
 And you may perish ere allow'd the hearing. (*Gloster without, L.H.*) This way, this way.
 I hear our father coming—Pardon me :—

(1) Good offices.

In cunning I must draw my sword upon you :—

Draw : seem to defend yourself ; (*They draw and fight.*)
now quit you well.

Yield : come before my father ; help, ho, here !—

Fly, brother ;—help, here, help !—Farewell, farewell.—

[*Exit EDGAR, R.H.*]

Some blood drawn on me wou'd beget opinion

Of our more fierce encounter ; I have seen

Drunkards do more than this in sport.

(*Stabs himself in the arm.*)

Enter GLOSTER and Servants, L.H., with torches.

Glost. Now, Edmund, where's the traitor ?

Edm. Here stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out,
Mumbling of wicked charms.—(*Sheathes his sword*)

Glost. But where is he ?

Edm. Look, sir, I bleed !

(*Wraps his arm up in his handkerchief.*)

Glost. Where is the villain, Edmund ?

Edm. Sir, he is fled. When by no means he could—

Glost. By no means, what ?

Edm. Persuade me to the murder of your lordship ;
But that I told him the revenging Gods

'Gainst parricides did all their thunders bend ;

Spoke with how manifold and strong a boud

The child was bound to the father ;—sir, in fine,

Seeing how loathly opposite I stood

To this unnatural purpose, in fell motion,

With his prepared sword, he charges home

My unprovided body, lanc'd mine arm :

But when he saw my best alarum'd spirits,

Bold in the quarrel's right, rous'd to the encounter,

Or whether gasted (1) by the noise I made,

Full suddenly he fled.

Glost. Let him fly far, this kingdom shall not hide him,
The noble duke my patron comes to night ;
By his authority I will proclaim
Rewards for him that brings him to the stake,
And death for the concealer ;

(1) Frighted.

Then of my lands, loyal and natural boy,
I'll work the means to make thee capable. (1) [Exeunt, L.H.

SCENE II.—*The Gates of Gloster's Castle.*

Enter KENT, R.H., in disguise, and OSWALD, L.H.

Osw. Good morrow, friend ; belong'st thou to this house ?

Kent. Ask them will answer thee.

Osw. Where may we set our horses ?

Kent. I'lh'mire.

Osw. I am in haste, pr'y thee, an' thou lov'st me, tell me.

Kent. I love thee not.

Osw. Why then, I care not for thee.

Kent. An I had thee in Lipsbury Pinfold, (2) I'd make thee care for me.

Osw. What dost thou mean ? I know thee not.

Kent. But, minion, I know thee.

Osw. What dost thou know me for ?

Kent. For a base, proud, beggarly, white-liver'd, glass-gazing, super-serviceable, finical rogue ; one that wou'd be a pimp in way of good service, and art nothing but a composition of knave, beggar, coward, pander, —

Osw. What a monstrous fellow a'rt thou, to rail at one that is neither known of thee, nor knows thee ?

Kent. Impudent slave ! not know me, who but two days since tript up thy heels before the king ? Draw, miscreant, or I'll make the moon shine through thee.

(Draws his sword.)

Osw. What means the fellow ? I tell thee, I have nothing to do with thee.

Kent. Draw, you rascal. I know your rogueship's office : you come with letters against the king, taking my young lady Vanity's part against her royal father. Draw, rascal.

Osw. Murder, murder, help.

[Exit, Kent after him, R.H.S.E.

(1) Capable of succeeding to my land, notwithstanding the legal bar to thy illegitimacy.

(2) *Lipsbury Pinfold* may be a cant expression, importing the same as Lob's Pound.—A *pinfold* is a pound.

Flourish of Trumpets. Enter DUKE OF CORNWALL, REGAN, Captain of the Guard, Attendants, GLOSTER and EDMUND, from the Gates, L.H.

Glost. All welcome to your graces, you do me honor.

Corn. Gloster, we have heard with sorrow that your life Has been attempted by your impious son.

But Edmund here has paid you strictest duty,

Glost. He did bewray (1) his practice, and receiv'd The hurt you see, striving to apprehend him.

Corn. Is he pursued ?

Glost. He is, my lord.

Reg. Use our authority to apprehend The traitor, and do justice on his head. For you, Edmund, that have signaliz'd Your virtue, you from henceforth shall be ours ; Natures of such firm trust we much shall need, A charming youth, and worth my farther thought ! (Aside)

Corn. Lay comfort, noble Gloster, to your breast, As we to ours. This night be spent in revels. We choose you, Gloster, for our host to night, A troublesome expression of our love. On, to the sports before us ! (Noise within, R.H.)—Who are these ?

Enter OSWALD, pursued by KENT. Oswald crying out for help, runs across the stage to L.H. The Captain of Guard draws his sword, L.H., stops Kent R.H., and then retires a little to R.H.

Glost. Now, what's the matter ?

Corn. Keep peace, upon your lives ; he dies that strikes. Whence, and what are ye ?

Reg. The messengers from our sister, and the king.

Corn. Your difference ? speak.

Osw. I'm scarce in breath, my lord.

Kent. No marvel, you have so bestir'd your valor. Nature disclaims the dastard ; a tailor made him.

Corn. Speak yet, how grew your quarrel ?

Osw. Sir, this old ruffin here, whose life I spar'd In pity to his beard,—

(1) Betray.

Kent. Thou essence bottle !
In pity to my beard !—Your leave, my lord,
And I will tread the musk-cat into mortar.

Corn. Know'st thou our presence ?

Kent. Yes, sir, but anger has a privilege.

Corn. Why art thou angry ?

Kent. That such a slave as this should wear a sword,
And have no courage ; office, and no honesty ;
Not frost and fire hold more antipathy
Than I and such a knave.

Glost. Why dost thou call him knave ?

Kent. His countenance likes me not. (1)

Corn. No more, perhaps, does mine, nor his, or hers.

Kent. Plain dealing is my trade ; and, to be plain, sir,
I have seen better faces in my time,
Than stand on any shoulders now before me.

Reg. This is some fellow, that having once been prais'd
For bluntness, since affects a saucy rudeness :
But I have known one of these surly knaves,
That in his plainness harbor'd more design
Than twenty cringing complimenting minions.

Corn. What's the offence you gave him ?

Osw. Never any, sir ;
At pleas'd the king, his master, lately
To strike me on a slender misconstruction ;
Whilst, watching his advantage, this old lurcher
Tript me behind, for which the king extoll'd him ;
And, flush'd with the honor of this bold exploit,
Drew on me here again.

Corn. Bring forth the stocks ; (*Two Guards exeunt at the gate.*) we'll teach you.

Kent. Sir, I am too old to learn ;
Call not the stocks for me ; I serve the king.
On whose employment I was sent to you :
You'll shew too small respect, and too bold malice
Against the person of my royal master,
Stocking his messenger.

(*Re-enter two Guards, they bring forth the stocks and seat, which they place R.H. of the gates.*)

(1) Pleases me not.

Corn. Bring forth the stocks ; as I have life and honor,
There shall he sit till noon. (*Guards seize Kent.*)

Reg. Till noon, my lord ! Till night, and all night too.

Kent. Why, madam, if I were your father's dog,
You would not use me so.

Reg. Sir, being his knave, I will.

(*Captain signs the Guard, who lead Kent away, and put him in the stocks.*)

Glost. Let me beseech your graces to forbear him ;
His fault is much, and the good king, his master,
Will check him for't : but needs must take it ill
To be thus slighted in his messenger.

Reg. We'll answer that ;
Our sister may receive it worse to have
Her gentleman assaulted. To our business, lead.

(*Flourish.—Exeunt all but Gloster and Oswald into the Castle.*)

Glost. I am sorry for thee, friend ; 'tis the duke's pleasure,
Whose disposition will not be controled.
But I'll intreat for thee.

Kent. Pray do not, sir.—
I have watch'd and travel'd hard ;
Some time I shall sleep out, the rest I'll whistle :
Farewell t'ye, sir. [Exit Gloster into the Castle.

(*Oswald remains on the stage to indulge a few vaporing antics with Kent, and then follows Gloster into the Castle.*)

SCENE III.—*A Forest.*

Enter EDGAR, L.H., muffled up.

Edg. I heard myself proclaim'd
And, by the friendly hollow of a tree,
Escap'd the hunt. No port is free, no place,

Where guards and most unusual vigilance
 Do not attend to take me.—How easy now
 'Twere to defeat the malice of my trial,
 And leave my griefs on my sword's reeking point ;
 But love detains me from death's peaceful cell,
 Still whispering me, Cordelia's in distress :
 Unkind as she is, I cannot see her wretched,
 But must be near to wait upon her fortune.
 Who knows but the blest minute yet may come,
 When Edgar may do service to Cordelia ?
 That charming hope still ties me to the oar
 Of painful life, and makes me too submit,
 To th' humblest shifts to keep that life a-foot.
 My face I will besmear, and knit my locks ;
 The country gives me proof and precedent
 Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,
 Strike in their numb'd and mortify'd bare arms
 Pins, iron spikes, thorns, sprigs of rosemary :
 And thus from sheep-cotes, villages and mills,
 Sometimes with pray'rs, sometimes with lunatic bans, (1)
 Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygood ! poor Tom ! (2)
 That's something yet. Edgar I am no more. [Exit, R.H.

SCENE IV.—*Before the Earl of Gloster's Castle.*

KENT, *discovered, in the stocks* —(Flourish of Drums and Trumpets, L.H.)

Enter KING LEAR, his Knights and Physician, L.H.

Lear. 'Tis strange, that they should so depart from home,
 And not send back our messenger.

Kent. Hail, noble master !

Lear. How ! mak'st thou this shame thy pastime ?
 What's he that has so much mistook thy place,
 To set thee here ?

Kent. It is both he and she, sir ; your son and daughter.

Lear. No.

(1) To ban, is to curse

(2) We should read, *Turlupin*. In the fourteenth century there was a new species of gipsies called *Turlupins*, a *fraternity of naked beggars*, which ran up and down Europe.

Kent. Yes.

Lear. No, I say.

Kent. I say, yea.

Lear. They durst not do't ;
They could not, would not do't.—

Resolve me with all modest haste, which way
Thou may'st deserve, or they impose this usage.

Kent. My lord, when at their home
I did commend your highness' letters to them
Ere I was ris'n, arrived another post,
Stew'd in his haste, breathless and panting forth
From Goneril, his mistress, salutations ;
Whose message being deliver'd, they took horse,
Commanding me to follow, and attend
The leisure of their answer ; which I did :
But meeting here that other messenger,
Whose welcome I perceiv'd had poison'd mine,
Being the very fellow that of late
Had shewn such rudeness to your highness, I,
Having more man than wit about me, drew ;
On which he rais'd the house with coward cries :—
This was the trespass, which your son and daughter
Thought worth the shame which you see it suffer here.

Lear. Oh ! this spleen swells upwards to my heart,
And heaves for passage !—Down, thou climbing rage,
Thy element's below. Where is this daughter ?

Enter GLOSTER, from the Castle—he advances, L.H.

Kent. Within, sir, at a masque.

Lear. Now, Gloster ?—Ha ! (*Gloster whispers Lear.*)
Deny to speak with me ? Th'are sick, th'are weary,
They've travell'd hard to-night ?—Mere fetches, sir :
Bring me a better answer.

Glost. My dear lord,
You know the fiery quality of the duke—

Lear. Vengeance ! death ! plague ! confusion !
Fiery ?—What quality ?—Why, Gloster, Gloster,
I'd speak with the Duke of Cornwall and his wife.

Glost. I have inform'd them so.

Lear. Inform'd them ? dost thou understand me, man ?
I tell thee, Gloster,—

Glost. Ay, my good lord.

Lear. The king would speak with Cornwall ; the dear father

Would with his daughter speak, commands her service.

Are they inform'd of this ? My breath and blood !

Fiery ? The fiery duke ?—Tell the hot duke,—

No, but not yet ; may be, he is not well ;

Infirmity doth still neglect all office ;

I beg his pardon, and I'll chide my rashness

That took the indispos'd and sickly fit

For the sound man.—But wherefore sits he there ?

Death on my state ! This act convinces me

(*Pointing to the stocks.*)

That this retiredness of the duke and her

Is plain contempt.—Give me my servant forth.—

Go, tell the duke and's wife I'd speak with 'em,

Now, instantly.—Bid 'em come forth and hear me ;

Or at their chamber door I'll beat the drum,

'Till it cry, Sleep to death.

Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, Page, two Soldiers, Captain of the Guard, and Guards, from the Castle, L.H.

Oh ! are you come ?

Corn. Health to the king !

Reg. I am glad to see your highness.

Lear. Regan, I think you are : I know what cause I have to think so. Should'st thou not be glad, I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb, Sepulch'ring an adulteress.—

(*Cornwall signs to Captain of Guard, Captain to the two Guards—they set Kent at liberty, who goes to R.H. of Physician, behind the King.*)

Beloved Regan, thou wilt shake to hear

What I shall utter ;—thou cou'dst ne'er ha' thought it ;—

Thy sister's naught : O Regan ! she hath tied

Ingratitude like a keen vulture, here ;

I scarce can speak to thee.

Reg. I pray you, sir, take patience ; I have hope That you know less to value her desert, Than she to slack her duty.

Lear. Ha ! How's that ?

Reg. I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail in her respects, but if, perchance,
She has restrain'd the riots of your followers,
'Tis on such grounds, and to such wholesome ends,
As clear her from all blame.

Lear. My curses on her !

Reg. O sir ! you're old,
And shou'd content you to be rul'd and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself ; therefore, good sir,
Return to our sister, and say you have wrong'd her.

Lear. Ha ! ask her forgiveness !
Do you but mark how this becomes the house : (1)
(*Kneeling.*)

Dear daughter, I confess that I am old :
Age is unnecessary ; (2) on my knees I beg,
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.

Reg. Good sir, no more of these unsightly passions
Return back to our sister.

Lear. Never, Regan ;
(*Rises.*)
She hath abated me of half my train,
Look'd black upon me, stabb'd me with her tongue :
All the stor'd vengeances of heav'n fall
On her ingrateful head ! Strike her young bones,
Ye taking airs, with lameness !—

Reg. O the blest gods ! thus will you wish on me,
When the rash mood—

Lear. No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse ;
Thy tender nature cannot give thee o'er
To such impiety : thou better know'st
The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
And dues of gratitude ; thou bear'st in mind
The half o'th' kingdom, which our love conferred
On thee and thine.

Reg. Good sir, to th' purpose.

Lear. Who put my man i'th' stocks ?

(*Trumpet sounds, L.H.*)

Corn. What trumpet's that ?

(1) The order of families, duties of relation.

(2) Old age has few wants.

Reg. I know't, my sister's ; (1) this confirms her letters

Enter OSWALD, L.H.

Sir, is your lady come ?

Lear. More torture still !

Out, varlet, from my sight !

(*Strikes Oswald, who runs off crying, R.H.U.E.*)

Corn. What means your grace ?

Lear. Who stock'd my servant ? Regan, I have hope
Thou did'st not know it. (*Trumpet sounds.*)

Enter GONERIL, Page and two Ladies, L.H.

Who comes here ? Oh, heav'ns !

If you do love old men ; if your sweet sway

Allow obedience ; if yourselves are old,

Make it your cause ; (*To Goneril.*) send down and take
my part ! (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Why, Gorgon, dost thou come to haunt me here ?

(*To Goneril.*)

Art not ashamed to look upon this beard ?—(*Regan takes
Goneril by the hand.*)

Darkness upon my eyes, they play me false !—

O Regan ! wilt thou take her by the hand ?

Gon. Why not by th' hand, sir ? How have I offended ?

All's not offence that indiscretion finds, (2)

And dotage terms so.

Lear. Heart, thou art too tough !

Reg. I pray you, sir, being old, confess you are so.

If, till the expiration of your month,

You will return, and sojourn with our sister,

Dismissing half your train, come then to me :

I'm now from home, and out of that provision

That shall be needful for your entertainment.

Lear. Return with her, and fifty knights dismiss'd ?

No, rather I'll abjure all roofs, and choose

To be companion to the midnight wolf,

(1) It seems from this passage, that the approach of great personages was announced by some distinguishing note or tune appropriately used by their own trumpeters.

(2) *Finds* is here used in the same sense as when a jury is said to *find a bill*.

My naked head expos'd to th' merciless air,
Than have my smallest wants supply'd by her.

Gon. At your choice, sir.

Lear. Now, I pr'ythee, daughter, do not make me mad :
I will not trouble thee, my child ; farewell ;
Let shame come when it will, I do not call it ;
I do not bid the thunder-bearer strike,
Nor tell tales of thee to avenging heaven.
Mend when thou canst : be better at thy leisure ;—
I can be patient, I can stay with Regan,
I, and my hundred knights.

Reg. Your pardon, sir ;
I looked not for you yet, nor am provided
For your fit welcome.

Lear. Is this well spoken now ?

Reg. My sister treats you fair. What ! fifty followers ?
Is it not well ? What should you need of more ?

Gon. Why might not you, my lord, receive attendance
From those whom she calls servants, or from mine ?

Reg. Why not, my lord ? If then they chance to slack
you,
We could control them.—If you come to me,
For now I see the danger, I entreat you
To bring but five-and-twenty ; to no more
Will I give place.

Lear. I gave you all !

Reg. And in good time you gave it.

Lear. Hold now, my temper, stand this bolt unmov'd,
And I am thunder-proof.— *(It begins to rain.)*

Gon. Hear me, my lord.
What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
To follow in a house, where twice so many
Have a command t'attend you ?

Reg. What need one ? *(Distant thunder.)*

Lear. Heav'ns, drop your patience down !
You see me here, ye gods ! a poor old man,
As full of grief as age, wretched in both !—
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts
Against their father, fool me not so much
To bear it tamely ; touch me with noble anger !
O, let not women's weapons, water drops,

Stain my man's cheek !—No you unnatural hags,
 I will have such revenges on you both,
 That all the world shall—I will do such things,—
 What they are, yet I know not ; but they shall be
 The terrors of the earth.—(Crosses to L.H.)—You think I'll
 weep ;

No, I'll not weep :—

I have full cause of weeping ; but this heart
 Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws, (1)
 Or ere I'll weep.— (Rain and thunder.)

O, gods, I shall go mad !

[*Exeunt, King Lear, Kent, and the Knights, L.H.—Cornwall, Regan, Goneril, Gloster, Oswald, Captain of the Guard, and Attendants, into the Castle.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Desert Heath.*

(*Lamps down.—Rain, thunder, and lightning.*)

Enter LEAR and KENT, L.H.S.E.

Lear. Blow, wind, and crack your cheeks ! rage ! blow !
 You cataracts, and hurricanoes, spout
 'Till you have drench'd our steeples !
 You sulph'rous and thought-executing (2) fires,
 Vaunt couriers (3) to oak-cleaving thunder-bolts,
 Singe my white head ! And thou, all shaking thunder,
 Strike flat the thick rotundity o' the world !
 Crack nature's moulds, all germens spill at once, (4)
 That make ingrateful man !

(1) A *flaw*, signifying a crack, or other similar imperfection. Our uthor, with his accustomed license, uses the word here for a *small broken particle*.

(2) Doing execution with rapidity equal to thought.

(3) *Avant couriers.* Fr. This phrase is not unfamiliar to other writers of Shakspeare's time. It originally meant the foremost scouts of an army.

(4) Crack nature's mould, and all the *seeds of matter*, that are hoarded within it.—To spill is to destroy.

Kent. Not all my best intreaties can persuade him
Into some needful shelter, or to 'bide
This poor slight cov'ring on his aged head,
Exposed to this wild war of earth and heav'n.

(*Thunder, lightning, and rain.*)

Lear. Rumble thy fill ! fight whirlwind, rain, and fire !
Not fire, wind, rain, or thunder, are my daughters ;
I tax not you, ye elements, with unkindness ;
I never gave you kingdoms, called you children ;
You owe me no obedience.—Then let fall
Your horrible pleasure !—Here I stand your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despis'd old man.—

(*Rain, thunder, and lightning.*)

Yet I will call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd
Your high engender'd battle 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. Oh ! oh ! 'tis foul ! (1)

Kent. Hard by, sir, is a hovel, that will lend
Some shelter from this tempest.

Lear. I will forget my nature. What ! so kind a father !—
Ay, there's the point. (Rain, thunder, and lightning.)

Kent. Consider, good my liege, things that love night,
Love not such nights as this ; these wrathful skies
Gallow (2) the very wanderers of the dark,
And make them keep their caves ; such drenching rain,
Such sheets of fire, such claps of horrid thunder,
Such groans of roaring winds, have ne'er been known.

(*Thunder very loud*)

Lear. Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undiscovered crimes !—
Hide, hide, thou murd'rer, hide thy bloody hand !—
Thou perjur'd villain, holy hypocrite,
That drink'st the widow's tears, sigh now, and ask
These dreadful summoners (3) grace !—I am a man
More sinn'd against, than sinning. (Crosses to R.H.)

(1) Shameful ; dishonorable.

(2) *Gallow*, a west country word, signifies to scare or frighten.

(3) *Summoners* are here the officers that summon offenders before a proper tribunal.

Kent. Good sir, to th' hovel.

Lear. My wits begin to turn.

Come on, my boy ; How dost, my boy ? art cold ?
 I'm cold myself : shew me this straw, my fellow ;
 The art of our necessity is strange,
 And can make vile things precious—My poor knave,
 Cold as I am at heart, I've one place there
 That's sorry yet for thee.

(*Rain.—Thunder.—Lightning.—Exeunt,* R.H)

SCENE II.—*A Room in Gloster's Castle.*

Enter EDMUND, R.H.

Edm. The storm is in our louder rev'lings drown'd.
 Thus wou'd I reign, could I but mount a throne.
 The riots of these proud imperial sisters
 Already have imposed the galling yoke
 Of taxes, and hard impositions, on
 The drudging peasant's neck, who bellows out
 His loud complaints in vain.—Triumphant queens !
 With what assurance do they tread the crowd !
 Oh ! for a taste of such majestic beauty,
 Which none but my hot veins are fit t'engage ;
 Nor are my wishes desp'rate ; for ev'n now,
 During the banquet, I observ'd their glances
 Shot thick at me ; and, as they left the room,
 Each cast by stealth, a kind inviting smile,
 The happy earnest—ha !

Enter two Pages, from different entrances, they deliver him each a letter, and exeunt, R.H. and L.H.

(*Reads.*)—Where merit is so transparent, not to behold it were, blindness, and not to reward it, ingratitude.

GONERIL.

Enough ! blind and ungrateful should I be,
 Not to obey the summons of this oracle.
 Now for the second letter.

(*Reads.*)—If modesty be not your enemy, doubt not to find me your friend.

REGAN.

Excellent Sibyl ! O my glowing blood !

I am already sick with expectation,
And pant for the possession.—Here Gloster comes,
With business on his brow ; be hush'd, my joys.

Enter GLOSTER, L.H.

Glost. I come to seek thee, Edmund, to impart a business of importance. I know thy loyal heart is touched to see the cruelty of these ungrateful daughters against our royal master.

Edm. Most savage and unnatural.

Glost. This change in the state sits uneasy. The commons repine aloud at their female tyrants ; already they cry out for the re-instalment of their good old king, whose injuries, I fear, will inflame them into mutiny.

Edm. 'Tis to be hop'd not feared.

Glost. Thou hast it boy ; 'tis to be hop'd indeed. On me they cast their eyes, and hourly court me To lead them on ; and, whilst this head is mine, I'm theirs. A little covert craft, my boy, And then for open action ; 'twill be employment Worthy such honest daring souls as thine. Thou, Edmund, art my trusty emissary. Haste on the spur, at the first break of day, With these dispatches to the Duke of Cambray.

(Gives him letters)

You know what mortal feuds have always flam'd Between this Duke of Cornwall's family, and his ; Full twenty thousand hardy mountaineers Th' inveterate prince will send to our assistance. Dispatch ; commend us to his grace, and prosper. [Exit, L.H.]

Edm. Yes, credulous old man, I will commend you to his grace, His grace the Duke of Cornwall :—instantly, I'll shew him these contents in thy own character, And seal'd with thy own signet ; then forthwith The chol'ric duke gives sentence on thy life, And to my hand thy vast revenues fall, To glut my pleasures that 'till now have starv'd (Retires.)

GLOSTER returns, L.H., followed by CORDELIA and ARANTHE, poorly dressed. Edmund observing at a distance.

Cord. Turn, Gloster, turn ; by all the sacred pow'rs
I do conjure you, give my griefs a hearing : (*Kneels.*)
You must, you shall, nay, I am sure you will ;
For you were always stil'd the just and good.

Glost. What would'st thou, princess ? Rise, and speak
thy griefs.

Cord. Nay, you shall promise to redress 'em too,
Or here I kneel for ever. I entreat
Thy succour for a father, and a king.
An injur'd father, and an injur'd king.

Glost. Consider princess, (Raises her.)
For whom thou begg'st, 'tis for the king that wrong'd thee.

Cord. O name not that ; he did not, could not, wrong
me.

Nay, muse not, Gloster ; for it is too likely
The injur'd king ere this is past your aid,
And gone distracted with his savage wrongs.

Cord. Or, what if it be worse ?—Can there be worse ?
Ah, 'tis too probable, this furious night
Has pierc'd his tender body ; the bleak winds
And cold rain chill'd, or lightning struck him dead ;
If it be so, your promise is discharg'd,
And I have only one poor boon to beg ;
That you convey me to his breathless trunk,
With my torn robes to wrap his hoary head,
With my torn hair to bind his hands and feet,
Then with a show'r of tears
To wash his clay-smear'd cheeks, and die beside him.

Glost. Oh fair Cordelia, thou hast piety
Enough t'atone for both thy sisters' crimes ;
I have already plotted to restore
My injur'd master, and thy virtue tells me
We shall succeed, and suddenly.

[*Exit, R.H.*

Cord. Dispatch, Aranthe ;
For in this disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the king, and bring him some relief. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Ar. How madam ! are you ignorant

That your most impious sisters have decreed
Immediate death for any that relieve him ?

Cord. I cannot dread the furies in this cause.

Ar. In such a night as this ! Consider, madam,
For many miles about there's scarce a bush
To shelter in.

Cord. Therefore no shelter for the king,
And more our charity to find him out.
What have not women dar'd for vicious love ?
And we'll be shining proofs that they can dare
For piety as much.

(*Thunder.*)

Blow winds, and lightnings fall ;
Bold in my conscious innocence I'll fly,
My royal father to relieve or die.

[*Exeunt, Cordelia and Aranthe, L.H.*

Edm. "In this disguise, we'll instantly
Go seek the king!"—Ha ! ha ! a lucky change :
That virtue which I fear'd would be my hind'rance,
Has prov'd the bawd to my design.
I'll be disguised, too.
Whilst they are poaching for me, I'll to the duke
With these dispatches ; then to the field,
Where, like the vigorous Jove, I will enjoy
This Semele in a storm.

[*Exit, L.H.*

SCENE III.—*Another part of the Heath.—Rain.—*
Thunder.—Lightning.

Enter KING LEAR and KENT, L.H.

Kent. Here is the place, my lord ; good, my lord, enter ;
The tyranny of this open night's too rough
For nature to endure. (Storm increases.)

Lear. Let me alone.

Kent. Good, my lord, enter ?

Lear. Wilt break my heart ?

Kent. I'd rather break my own.

Lear. Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm Invades us to the skin ; so 'tis to thee ; But where the greater malady is fixt, The lesser is scarce felt : (1)—The tempest in my mind Doth from my senses take all feeling else, Saye what beats there. Filial ingratitude ! Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand For lifting food to't ?—But I'll punish home ! No, I will weep no more. (*Rain.—Thunder.—Lightning.*) In such a night To shut me out !—Pour on, I will endure— In such a night as this ! O Regan, Goneril ! Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all— Oh, that way madness lies ! let me shun that ; No more of that. (Crosses to R.H.)

Kent. See, my lord, here's the entrance.

Lear. Well, I'll go in. And pass it all ; I'll pray, and then I'll sleep. (*Thunder.*) Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are, That 'bide the pelting of this pitiless storm, How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides Sustain this shock ; your raggedness defend you From seasons such as these ? Oh, I have ta'en Too little care of this. Take physic, pomp ; Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel, That thou may'st cast the superflux to them, And shew the heav'ns more just.

Edg. (*In the Hovel, R.H.U.E., throwing out straw.*) Five fathom and a half—Poor Tom !

Kent. What art thou that dost grumble there i'th' straw ? Come forth.

Enter EDGAR, disguised, from the Hovel, R.H.U.E.
Advances, R.H.

Edg. Away ! the foul fiend follows me—Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind—Mum, go to thy bed and warm thee—Ha ! what do I see ?

(1) *But where the greater malady is fix'd, the lesser is scarce felt*, that of two concomitant pains, the greater obscures or relieves the less, is an aphorism of Hippocrates. See *Disquisitions, Metaphysical and Literary*, by F. Sayers, M.D., 1793, p. 68.

By all my griefs, the poor old king bare-headed,
And drench'd in this foul storm ! Professing Syrens,
Are all your protestations come to this ? (Aside.)

Lear. Tell me, fellow, didst thou give all to thy two daughters ? (Crosses to Edgar.)

Edg. Who gives any thing to poor Tom, whom the foul fiend has led through fire and through flame, (1) through bushes and bogs ; that has laid knives under his pillow, and halters in his pew ; that has made him proud of heart to ride on a bay trotting horse over four-inch'd bridges, to course his own shadow for a traitor ?—Bless thy five wits ! (2) Tom's a-cold. Bless thee from whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking ! (3)—Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes. Sa, sa ; there I could have him now, and there, and there again. (Strikes with his Staff.)

Lear. What, have his daughters brought him to this pass ? Could'st thou save nothing ? Didst thou give them all ?

Kent. He has no daughter, sir.

Lear. Death ! traitor, nothing could have subdu'd nature To such a lowness, but his unkind daughters.

Edg. Pillicock sat upon pillicock hill ; hallo, hallo, hallo.

Lear. Is it the fashion that discarded fathers Should have such little mercy on their flesh ? Judicious punishment ! 'Twas this flesh begot Those pelican (4) daughters.

Edg. Take heed of the foul fiend ; obey thy parents ; keep thy word justly ; swear not ; commit not with man's sworn spouse ; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. (Wind and rain.) Tom's a-cold.

Lear. What hast thou been ?

Edg. A serving-man, proud of heart ; that curl'd my hair ; used perfume and washes ; that serv'd the lust of my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with her ; swore as many oaths as I spoke words ; and broke them all in the sweet face of heaven : Let not the paint, nor the

(1) Alluding to the *ignis fatuus*, supposed to be lights kindled by mischievous beings to lead travelers into destruction.

(2) So the five senses were called by our old writers.

(3) To *take*, is to blast, or to strike with malignant influence.

(4) The young pelican is fabled to suck the mother's blood.

patch, nor the rustling of silks, betray thy poor heart to woman ; keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, (1) thy pen from creditor's books, and defy the foul fiend. (*Wind.*) Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind.—Ha, no nonny, dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa ; let him trot by.

Lear. Death ! thou wert better in thy grave, than thus to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the sky. Yet consider him well, and man's no more than this ; thou art indebted to the worm for no silk, to the beast for no hide, to the cat for no perfume.—Ha ! here's two of us are sophisticated : thou art the thing itself ; unaccommodated man is no more than such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art.

Off, off, ye vain disguises, empty lendings,
I'll be my original self ; quick, quick, uncase me.

Kent. Defend his wits, good heaven !

Lear. One point I had forgot ; what is your name ?

Edg. Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the wall-newt and the water-newt ; that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, eats cow-dung for salads, swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog ; that drinks the green mantle of the standing pool ; that's whipt from tything to tything ; (2) that has three suits to his back, six shirts to his body ;

Horse to ride and weapon to wear ;
But rats and mice, and such small deer,
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.

Beware my follower ; peace, Smolkin, (3) peace, thou foul fiend !

Lear. One word more, but be sure true counsel ; tell me, is a madman a gentleman, or a yeoman ?

Kent. I fear'd 'twould come to this ; his wits are gone.
(*Aside.*)

Edg. Frateretto (4) calls me, and tells me, Nero (5) is

(1) A *placket* is a stomacher.

(2) A *tything* is a division of a place, a district ; the same in the country as a ward in the city.

(3) The names of the other punie spirits cast out of Trayford, were these : “ Hilco, Smolkin, Hillioi,” &c., *Harsnet*, p 49, *PERCY*.

(4) “ *Frateretto*, Fliberdigibet, Hoberdidance, Tocobatto, were four devils of the round or morrice. These four had forty assistants under them, as themselves do confess.” *Harsnet*, p 49, *PERCY*.

(5) *Mr. Upton* observes that *Rabelais*, B. 11, c. xxx. says that *Nerc*

an angler in the lake of darkness. Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend.

Lear. Right, ha ! ha !—was it not pleasant to have a thousand with red-hot spits come hissing in upon them ?

Edg. My tears begin to take his part so much, They mar my counterfeiting. *(Aside.)*

Lear. The little dogs and all, *Tray, Blanch, and Sweet-heart*, see, they bark at me.

Edg. Tom will throw his head at 'em : 'vaunt, ye curs !

Be thy mouth or blaek, or white, (1)

Tooth that poisons, if it bite :

Mastiff, grey-hound, mongrel grim,

Hound, or spaniel, brache, (2) or lym, (3)

Bob-tail tike, (4) or trundle-tail ;

Tom will make 'em weep and wail ;

For with throwing thus my head,

Dogs leap the hatch, and all are fled.—See, see,

see. *(Throws his straw head dress at them.)*

Come, march to wakes, and fairs, and market towns.—

Poor Tom, thy horn is dry. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Lear. You, sir, I entertain you for one of my hundred ; only I do not like the fashion of your garments ; you'll say they're Persian ; but no matter, let 'em be changed.

Edg. This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet ; he begins at curfew, and walks till the first cock ; (5) he gives the web and the pin ; knits the elflock ; squints the eye, and makes the hair-lip ; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the poor creatures of the earth.

Saint Withold footed thrice the wold ;

He met the night-mare and her nine fold,

was a fiddler in hell, and *Trajan* an angler. *Nero* is introduced in the present play above eight hundred years before he was born.

(1) To have the *roof of the mouth black* is in some dogs a proof that their breed is genuine.

(2) *Brache*, properly speaking is the female of the *Rache*, but is generally applied to bitches of every description. *Vide.—New Way to Pay Old Debts*, A. 1, S. 1.

(3) *A lym, or lyme*, was a blood-hound.

(4) A *Tijk*, is a Runic word for a little, or worthless dog.

(5) It is an old tradition that spirits were relieved from the confinement in which they were held during the day ; at the time of curfew, that is, at the close of day, and were permitted to wander at large till the first cock crowing.

"Twas there he did appoint her ;
He bid her alight, and her troth plight,
And, aroint (1) the witch, aroint her.

Enter GLOSTER, and two Servants, with Torches, L.H.

Glost. What, hast your grace no better company ?

Edg. The prince of darkness is a gentleman ; Modo he is call'd, and Mahu. (2)

Glost. Go (*To Lear.*) with me, sir ; hard by I have a tenant. My duty cannot suffer me to obey in all your daughters' hard commands ; though their injunctions be to bar my doors, and let this tyrannous night take hold upon you, yet I have ventur'd to come seek you out, and bring you where both fire and food are ready.

Kent. Good, my lord, take this offer.

Lear. First, let me talk with this philosopher.

(*Lear and Edgar sit on the ground.*)

Say, Stagyrite, (3) what is the cause of thunder ?

Glost. Beseech you, sir, go with me.

Lear. I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban. What is your study ?

Edg. How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

Lear. Let me ask you a word in private

(*Whispers Edgar.*)

Kent. His wits are quite unsettled ; good sir, let's force him hence. (To *Gloster.*)

Glost. Can'st blame him ? His daughters seek his death.

(To *Kent.*)

This bedlam but disturbs him the more ; fellow, be gone.

(*Edgar rises.*)

Edg. Child (4) Rowland to the dark tower came,
His word was still fie, foh, and fum, (*Crosses to R.H.*)
I smell the blood of a British man.—O, torture ! (Aside.)

[*Exit, R.H.U.E., into the hovel.*

(1) *Aroint*, or avoid, begone.

(2) *Maho* was the chief devil that had possession of Sarah Williams ; but another of the possessed, named Richard Mainy, was molested by a still more considerable fiend, called Modu. *Harsnet's Declaration.*

(3) *Aristotle* so called from *Stagira*, a town in Macedonia, where he was born.

(4) The word *child* is often applied to knights.

Glost. Now, I pr'ythee, friend, let's take him in our arms ;

There's a litter ready ; lay him in't,
And drive toward Dover, friend, where thou shalt meet
Both welcome and protection.
Good sir, along with us.

Lear. You say right ; let 'em anatomize Regan, see what breeds about her heart. Is there any cause in nature for these hard hearts ?

Kent. I beseech your grace,— (They raise him.)

Lear. Hist !—make no noise, make no noise ;—draw the curtains ; closer, closer ; so, so, so,—we'll go to supper i'the morning,—so, so, so.

(*King Lear falls asleep, and is carried off by Gloster and Kent, R.H. Thunder and lightning.*)

When LEAR is carried off EDGAR enters, and speaks this speech from the original text.

When we our betters see bearing our woes,
We scarcely think our miseries our foes ;
Who alone suffers, suffers most i'the mind,
Leaving free things and happy shows behind.
But then the mind much sufferance doth o'erskip,
When grief hath mates and bearing fellowship
How light and portable my pain seems now,
When that which makes me bend, makes the king bow.
He childed as I fathered ; Torn away !
Mark the high noises, and thyself bewray.
When false opinion, whose wrong thoughts defile thee.
In thy just proof repeats and reconciles thee.
What will hap more to-night ? safe 'scape the king.
Lurk ! lurk !

[Exit R.H.U.E.]

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment in the Earl of Gloster's.*

Enter CORNWALL, GONERIL, EDMUND, Page, and Two Ladies, R.H.

Corn. I will have my revenge, ere I depart this house.
(*To Edmund*) This letter proves your father traitor to us.
(*Crosses to c. Gives letter to Goneril.*)

Edm. How malicious is my fortune, that I must repent the being just.

Would to heaven this treachery were not, or I not the discoverer !

Corn. Good sister, post speedily to my lord, your husband Show him this letter.

Advise the duke to a most speedy preparation.

We are bound to the like !

Edmund, keep you our sister company.

The revenges we are bound to take upon your Trait'rous father, are not fit for your beholding.

Enter CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

Now ! where's the king ?

Capt. My Lord of Gloster hath conveyed him Hence. Some five or six and thirty of his Knights, hot questrists after him, met him At gate ;—who with some other of the lords Dependants, are gone towards Dover, Where they boast to have well armed friends.

Corn. (To Page.) Get horses for your mistress.

[*Page exits, L.H.*

Gon. Farewell dear lord and brother.

[*Exit Goneril and Ladies. Edmund is following*

Corn. Edmund, farewell ! [*Exit Edmund, L.H.* Go seek the traitor Gloster ! Pinion the Villain ! Bring him straight before us.

[*Exit Captain, L.H.*

Though well we may not pass upon his life Without the form of justice ; yet our power Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men May blame, but shall not dare control !

[*Exit, R.H.*

END OF ACT III

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Apartment in Albany's Castle.*

Enter ALBANY, R.H., CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, L.H.

Alb. Now, sir ! what means this haste ? What news ?

Capt. Oh, my good lord ! the Duke of Cornwall's dead. Slain by a servant ; as with cruel hand He did destroy the sight of aged Gloster.

Alb. What say you ?

Capt. A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse, opposed against the act, bending His sword to his great master, who thereat Enraged, flew on him ; and amongst Them fell'd him dead !—but not without That harmful stroke which since hath pluck'd him after !

Alb. This shows you are above, ye justices ! That these our nether crimes so speedily can 'Venge. Alas ! poor Gloster ! Where was his son When they did take his eyes ? Knew he the wickedness ?

Capt. Ay, my good lord ! 'twas he informed Against him, and quit the house on purpose that Their punishment might have freer course. Of this The poor old man is now assured !

Alb. Gloster, I live but to avenge thy wrongs ! Come hither, friend ; tell me what more thou knowest.

Exit, L.H.

SCENE II.—*The open country.*

Enter EDGAR, in disguise, R.H.

Edg. The lowest and most abject thing of fortune Stands still in hope, and is secure from fear. The lamentable change is from the best, The worst returns to better.—Who comes here ?

(Retires half way up the Stage.)

My father poorly led ! deprived of sight ! The precious stones torn from their bleeding rings ! World ! world ! world ! But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee, Life would not yield to age.

Enter GLOSTER, led by an OLD MAN, L.H.

Old M. Oh, my good lord, I have been your tenant,
And your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

Glos. Away, get thee away ; good friend, begone
Thy comforts can do me no good at all ;
Thee they may hurt.

Old M. You cannot see your way.

Glos. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes,
I stumbled when I saw.—Oh, dear son Edgar !
The food of thy abused father's wrath,
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,
I'd say I had eyes again.

Edg. (*Aside.*) Alas ! he's sensible that I was wronged,
And, should I own myself, his tender heart
Would break betwixt the extremes of grief and joy.

Old M. How now ? who's there ?

Edg. (*Advances R.H. of Glos.*) A charity for poor Tom.
Play fair, and defy the foul fiend.

(*Aside.*) Oh, gods ! and must I still pursue this trade,
Trifling beneath such loads of misery ?

Old M. (*R.C.*) 'Tis poor mad Tom.

Glos. (*R.C.*) In the late storm I such a fellow saw,
Which made me think a man a worm.
Where is the lunatic ?

Old M. Here, my lord.

Glos. Get thee now away ; if, for my sake,
Thou wilt o'ertake us hence a mile or two
I' th' way to Dover, do 't for ancient love,
And bring some cov'ring for this naked wretch,
Whom I'll intreat to lead me.

Old M. Alack, my lord, he's mad.

Glos. 'Tis the time's plague, when madmen lead the
blind.
Do as I bid thee.

Old M. I'll bring him the best 'parel that I have,
Come on't what will. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Glos. Sirrah ! naked fellow !

Edg. (*R.H.*) Poor Tom's a-cold.—(*Aside.*) I cannot fool it
longer,
And yet I must.—Bless thy sweet eyes, they bleed ;
Believ't, poor Tom e'en weeps his blind to see 'em.

Glos. Know'st thou the way to Dover ?

Edg. Both stile and gate, horse-way and foot-path.

Poor Tom has been scared out of his good wits.

Bless every true man's son from the foul fiend !

Glos. Here, take this purse; that I am wretched
Makes thee the happier. Heav'n deal so still !
Thus let the griping usurer's hoard be scattered,
So distribution shall undo excess,
And each man have enough. Dost thou know Dover ?

Edg. Ay, master.

Glos. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head
Looks dreadfully down upon the roaring deep;
Bring me but to the very brink of it,
And I'll repair the poverty thou bear'st
With something rich about me.—From that place
I shall no leading need.

Edg. Give me thy arm; poor Tom shall guide thee.

[*Exit* R.H.]

SCENE III.—*Albany's Palace.*

Enter GONERIL, with a letter, and OSWALD, L.H.

Gon. (L.C.) It was great ignorance, Gloster's eyes being
out,
To let him live; where he arrives he moves
All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,
In pity to his misery, to dispatch him.

Osw. (L.H.) No, madam; he's returned on speedy summons
Back to your sister.

Gon. Ah ! I like not that !
Such speed must have the wings of love. Where's Al-
bany ?

Osw. Madam, within; but never man so changed:
I told him of the uproar of the peasants—
He smiled at it; when I informed him
Of Gloster's treason—

Gon. Trouble him no further;
It is his coward spirit. Back to our sister;
Hasten her musters on, and let her know
I have given the distaff into my husband's hands;
That done, with special care deliver these dispatches,
In private, to young Gloster.

Enter CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, R.H.

Cap (R.H.) Oh, madam, most unseasonable news !
The Duke of Cornwall's dead of his late wound,
Whose loss your sister has in part supplied,
Making brave Edmund general of her forces.

Gon. (Aside.) One way, I like this well;
But, being a widow, and my Gloster with her,
'T may blast the promised harvest of our love.
A word more, sir: (*To Oswald,*) add speed to your journey;
And if you chance to meet with that blind traitor,
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

[*Exeunt, Goneril and Captain, R.H., Oswald, L.H.*

SCENE IV.—*Another Part of the Country.*

Enter GLOSTER, and EDGAR as a Peasant, L.H.U.E.

Glos. When shall we come to th' top of that same hill ?

Edg. We climb it now, mark, how we labor.

Glos. Methinks the ground is even.

Edg. Horribly steep. Hark, do you hear the sea ?

Glos. No, truly.

Edg. Why, then your other senses grow imperfect,
By your eyes' anguish.

Glos. So it may be, indeed.

Methinks thy voice is altered, and thou speak'st
In better phrase and matter than thou didst.

Edg. You are much deceived; in nothing am I altered
But my garments.

Glos. Methinks, you're better spoken.

Edg. Come on, sir; (*Crosses to R.H.*) here's the place.
How fearful

And dizzy 'tis, to cast one's eyes so low !
The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air
Shew scarce so big as beetles; half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire—dreadful trade !
The fishermen that walk upon the beach,
Appear like mice; and yon tall anch'ring bark
Seems lessened to her cock ; her cock, a buoy
Almost too small for sight; the murmur'ring surge

Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
Lest my brain turn, and the disorder make me
Tumble down headlong.

Glos. Set me where you stand.

Edg. (*Puts him across to R.H.*) You are now within a
foot of th' extreme verge :

For all beneath the moon I would not now
Leap forward.

Glos. (*R.H.*) Let go my hand.

Here is another purse, in it a jewel
Well worth a poor man's taking. Get thee farther,
Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.

Edg. Fare you well, sir. (*Retires a little, R.H.*) That
I do trifle thus

With his despair, is with design to cure it. (*Aside.*)

Glos. (*Kneels.*) Thus, mighty gods, this world I do re-
nounce,

And in your sight shake my afflictions off ;
If I could bear them longer, and not fall
To quarrel with your great opposeless wills,
My snuff and feebler part of nature should
Burn itself out. If Edgar live, oh, bless him !
Now, fellow, fare thee well.

(*Prepares to fall, when Edgar advances and
catches him.*)

Edg. Hold !—who comes here ?

*Enter KING LEAR, with a Coronet of Flowers on his head
and Straw in his hand, L.H.U.E.*

Lear. No, no ; they cannot touch me for coining ;
I am the king himself.

Edg. Oh, piercing sight !

Lear. Nature's above art in that respect. There's your
press-money. That fellow handles his bow like a crow-
keeper ;—draw me a clothier's yard. A mouse, a mouse !
Peace, hoa ! There's my gauntlet ; I'll prove it on a
giant. Bring up the brown bills ; well flown, barb ; I' th'
white ; i' th' white ;—Hewgh ! give the word.

Edg. Sweet Marjoram.

Lear. Pass.

(*Edgar crosses, L.H.*)

Glos. I know that voice.

Lear. Ha ! Goneril ! With a white beard ? They flat-
tered me like a dog, and told me I had white hairs on my
chin, before the black ones were there. (R.H.) To say ay
and no to everything that I said. Ay, and no, too, was no
good divinity. When the rain came once to wet me, and
the winds to make me chatter,—when the thunder would
not peace at my bidding, there I found 'em, there I smelt
them out. Go to, they are not men of their words ; they
told me I was everything ; 'tis a lie ;
I am not ague-proof. (L.H.)

Glos. That voice I well remember: is't not the king ?

Lear. Ay, every inch a king ! When I do stare,
See how the subject quakes !
I pardon that man's life. What was the cause ?

Adultery ?

Thou shalt not die. Die for adultery ? No !
The wren goes to't, and the small, gilded fly
Engenders in my sight. (R.H.) Let copulation thrive ;
For Gloster's bastard son was kinder to his father
Than were my daughters, got i' th' lawful bed.
To't, luxury, pell mell; for I lack soldiers—
There's money for thee.

Glos. (R.H.C.) Let me kiss that hand.

Lear. Let me wipe it first ; it smells of mortality.

Glos. Speak, sir : do you know me ?

Lear. I remember thine eyes well enough. Nay, do
thy worst, blind Cupid, I'll not love—Read me this chal-
lenge ; mark but the penning of it.

Glos. Were all the letters suns, I could not see.

Lear. Read, read, read.

Glos. What ! with this case of eyes ?

Lear. Oh, ho ! are you there with me ? No eyes in
your head, nor no money in your purse ? Yet you see
how this world goes.

Glos. I see it feelingly.

Lear. What, art mad ? A man may see how this world
goes, with no eyes. Look with thy ears ; see how yon
justice rails on yon simple thief. Hark in thine ear :
shake 'em together, and the first that drops, be it thief or
justice, is a villain.—Thou hast seen a farmer's dog bark
at a beggar ?

Glos. Ay, sir.

Lear. (c.) And the man run from the cur ; there thou might'st behold the great image of authority : a dog's obeyed in office. Thou rascle beadle, hold thy bloody hand ! Why dost thou lash that strumpet ? Thou hotly lust'st to enjoy her in that kind for which thou whip'st her ; do, do ! the judge that sentenced her has been beforehand with thee.

Glos. How stiff is my vile sense that yields not yet !

Lear. I tell thee, the usurer hangs the cozener. Through tattered clothes small vices do appear ; Robes and fur gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold, And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks : Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw doth pierce it.— Why, there 'tis for thee, friend—make much of it ; It has the power to seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes, and, like a scurvy politician, seem to see the things thou dost not. Pull, pull—off my boots ; hard, harder; so, so.

Glos. Oh, matter and impertinency mixed ! Reason in madness !

Lear. If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes. I know thee well enough—thy name is Gloster. Thou must be patient ; we came crying hither ; Thou know'st, the first time that we taste the air, We wail and cry. I'll preach to thee : mark me.

Edg. Break, lab'ring heart !

Lear. When we are born, we cry that we are come To this great stage of fools.

Enter PHYSICIAN and two Knights, R.H.U.E.

Phys. (R.H.) Oh ! here he is ! lay hand upon him—sir, Your dearest daughter sends—

Lear. No rescue ? What, a prisoner ? I am even the natural fool of fortune. Use me well, you shall have ransom.—Let me haye surgeons. Oh ! I am cut to the brains.

Phys. You shall have anything.

Lear. No seconds ? All myself ?

I will die bravely, like a bridegroom. What ! I will be jovial ; come, come ; I am a king, My masters, know you that ? (Crosses, R.H.)

Phys. You are a royal one, and we obey you.

Lear. It were an excellent stratagem to shoe a troop of horse with felt ; I'll put it in proof.—No noise, no noise. Now will we steal upon these sons-in-law, and then—Kill, kill, kill, kill ! [*Exeunt King Lear and Physician*, R.H.]

Edg. A sight most moving in the meanest wretch, Past speaking in a king.

Glos. (R.H.) Now, good sir, what are you ?

Edg. (C.) A most poor man, made tame to fortune's strokes,

And prone to pity by experienced sorrows.
Give me your hand.

Glos. You gentle gods, take my breath from me,
And let not my ill-genius tempt me more
To die before you please.

Enter OSWALD, L.H.

Osw. (L.H.) A proclaimed prize ! Oh, most happily met ! That eyeless head of thine was first framed flesh To raise my fortunes. Thou old unhappy traitor, The sword is out that must destroy thee. (*Draws his sword.*)

Glos. Now let thy friendly hand put strength enough to't. (*Edgar raises his staff.*)

Osw. Wherefore, bold peasant, Dar'st thou support a published traitor ? Hence, Lest I destroy thee, too ; let go his arm.

Edg. Chill not let go, zir, without 'vurther 'casion.

Osw. (L.H.C.) Let go, slave ; or thou diest.

Edg. (L.H.C.) Good gentleman, go your gait, and let poor volk pass ; and chu'd ha' bin zwaggered out of my life, it would not have been zo long as 'tis by a vortnight.— Nay, an' thou com'st near th' old man, I'st try whether your costard or my ballow be th' harder.

Osw. Out, dunghill !

Edg. Chill pick your teeth, sir ; come, no matter for your foines. (*Knocks him down.*)

Osw. Slave, thou hast slain me ! oh, untimely death !

(*Dies.*)

Edg. I know thee well, a serviceable villain ; As duteous to the vices of thy mistress As lust could wish.

Glos. (c.) What? Is he dead?

Edg. This is a letter-carrier, and may have
Some papers of intelligence, that may stand
Our party in good stead to know.—What's here?

(*Takes a letter out of his pocket and reads it.*)
“To Edmund, Earl of Gloster.

(*Reads.*) “Let our mutual loves be remembered: you have many opportunities to cut Albany off. If he return the conqueror, then I am still a prisoner, and his bed my jail; from the loathed warmth of which deliver me, and supply the place for your labor.” “GONERIL.”

(*Aside.*) A plot upon the duke, her husband's life,
And the exchange my brother!—

In time and place convenient I'll produce
This letter to the sight of th' injured duke,
As best shall serve our purpose.

(*Music, L.H.*)

Come, your hand;
Far off, methinks, I hear the beaten drum;
Come, sir, I will bestow you with a friend.”

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

END OF ACT IV.

A C T V.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber.*—KING LEAR asleep on
a couch, R.H.

CORDELIA, R.H., seated, PHYSICIAN, and two Knights standing by him.

Cor. All blessed secrets;
All you unpublished virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears—be aidant and remediate,
In the good man's distress—
Oh, you kind heavens,
Cure this great breach in his abused nature;
Th' untuned and jarring senses, oh, wind up,
Of this child changed father.

Phys. (L.H.) We have employed the utmost pow'r of art,
And this deep rest will perfect our design.

Cor. Oh, Regan ! Goneril ! Inhuman sisters !
 Had he not been your father, these white hairs
 Had challenged, sure, some pity ! Was this a face
 To be exposed against the warring winds ?
 My enemy's dog, though he had bit me, should
 Have stood that night against my fire.

Phys. Be by, good madam, when we do awake him ;
 I doubt not of his temperance.

Cor. Is he arrayed ?

Phys. Ay, madam, in the heaviness of his sleep
 We put fresh garments on him.

Cor. Oh, my dear father ! Restoration, hang
 Thy med'cine on my lips ; and let this kiss
 Repair those violent harms, that my two sisters
 Have in thy rev'rence made. He wakes.

(*When Lear is seated*)

Speak to him.

Phys. Madam, do you ; 'tis fittest.

Cor. How does my royal lord ? How fares your ma-
 jesty ?

Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' th' grave.

(*Lear rises, and Cordelia supports him down to
 the front of the Stage.*)

Cor. (r.h.) Speak to me, sir; who am I ?

Lear. (c.) You are a soul in bliss; but I am bound
 Upon a wheel of fire, which my own tears
 Do scald like molten lead.

Cor. Sir, do you know me ?

Lear. You are a spirit, I know; when did you die ?

Cor. Still, still far wide.

Phys. Madam, he's scarce awake ; he'll soon grow more
 composed.

Lear. Where have I been ? Where am I ? Fair daylight ?
 I am mightily abused : I should even die with pity
 To see another thus. I will not swear
 These are my hands.

Cor. Oh, look upon me, sir,
 And hold your hand in blessing o'er me. (*Lear attempts
 to kneel,)*—Nay,
 You must not kneel.

Lear. Pray, do not mock me :

I am a very foolish, fond old man,
Fourscore and upward; and, to deal plainly,
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.

Cor. Nay, then, farewell to patience ! Witness for me
Ye mighty pow'rs, I ne'er complained till now !

Lear. Methinks, I should know you, and know this
man ;
Yet I am doubtful; for I'm mainly ignorant
What place this is; and all the skill I have
Remembers not these garments ; nor do I know
Where I did sleep last night.—Pray, do not mock me ;
For, as I am a man, I think that lady
To be my child Cordelia.

Cor. Oh, my dear, dear father !

Lear. Be your tears wet ? Yes, faith ; pray, do not
weep.

I know I have given thee cause, and am so humbled
With crosses since, that I could ask
Forgiveness of thee, were it possible
That thou couldst grant it ;
If thou hast poison for me, I will drink it,
Bless thee, and die.

Cor. (c.) Oh, pity, sir, a bleeding heart, and cease
This killing language.

Lear. (L.H.) Tell me, friends, where am I ?

Phys. (R.H.) In your own kingdom, sir.

Lear. Do not abuse me.

Phys. Be comforted, good madam, for the violence
Of his distemper's past; we'll lead him in,
Nor trouble him, till he's better settled.
Will it please you, sir, walk into freer air ?

Lear. You must bear with me, I am old and foolish ;
Forget and forgive.

(*The Physician leads off King Lear, followed by
two Knights, L.H.*)

Cor. The gods restore you. (A distant March.)
Hark, I hear afar
The beaten drum. Old Kent's a man of's word.
Oh ! for an arm
Like the fierce thunderer's, when the earth-born sons
Stormed heaven, to fight this injured father's battle !

That I could shift my sex, and dye me deep
 In his opposer's blood ! But, as I may,
 With women's weapons, piety and pray'rs,
 I'll aid his cause.—You never-erring gods,
 Fight on his side, and thunder on his foes
 Such tempests, as his poor aged head sustained !
 Your image suffers when a monarch bleeds ;
 'Tis your own cause ; for that your succours bring ;
 Revenge yourselves, and right an injured king. [Exit, L.H.

SCENE II.—*The Camp of the British Forces, near Dover.*—Flourish.*

Enter ALBANY, L.H., Officers, Soldiers, Guards, EDGAR, R.H., meeting him.

Edg. If e'er your grace had speech with man so poor,
 Hear me one word.

Alb. I'll overtake you.

[*Exeunt all but Albany and Edgar, L.H.*

Alb. (c.) Speak.

Edg. (r.h.) Before you fight the battle, ope this letter.
 If you have victory, let the trumpet sound
 For him that brought it : wretched though I seem,
 I can produce a champion that will prove
 What is avouched there. If you miscarry,
 Your business of the world hath so an end,
 And machination ceases. Fortune love you !

Alb. Stay till I have read the letter.

Edg. I was forbid it.

When time shall serve, let but the herald cry,
 And I'll appear again. [Exit, R.H.

Alb. Why, fare the well ; I will o'erlook thy paper.

[Exit, L.H.

SCENE III.—*A Valley near the Field of Battle.*

Enter EDGAR and GLOSTER, R.H.U.E.

Edg. Here, father, take the shadow of this tree
 For your good host ; pray that the right may thrive :
 If ever I return to you again,
 I'll bring you comfort. [Exit, L.H.

* This Scene is usually omitted in the Representation.

Glos. Grace go with you, sir. (*An alarum without, L.H.*)
 The fight grows hot ; the whole war's now at work,
 And the gored battle bleeds in every vein,
 Whilst drums and trumpets drown loud slaughter's roar.
 Where's Gloster now, that used to head the onset,
 And scour the ranks where deadliest danger lay ?
 Here, like a shepherd, in a lonely shade,
 Idle, unarmed, and list'ning to the fight.
 No more of shelter, thou blind worm, but forth
 To th' open field ; the war may come this way,
 And crush thee into rest. (*Advances a little.*)
 Oh, dark despair ! When, Edgar, wilt thou come
 To pardon, and dismiss me to the grave ?
 (*A retreat is sounded, L.H.*)
 Hark ! a retreat ! The king, I fear, has lost.

Re-enter EDGAR, L.H.

Edg. Away, old man ; give me your hand ; away !
 (*Crosses, R.H.*)
 King Lear has lost ; he and his daughter ta'en :
 Give me thy hand. Come on !
Glos. No farther, sir ; a man may rot even here.
Edg. What ! in ill thoughts again ! Men must endure
 Their going hence, ev'n as their coming hither.
 Ripeness is all.—Come on !
Glos. And that's true, too. [*Exeunt, R.H.*

SCENE IV.—*The British Camp near Dover.*
Duke of Albany's Tent.

Flourish, L.H. Enter DUKE OF ALBANY, EDMUND, Herald,
 Attendants, Soldiers, &c., L.H.

Alb. (c.) Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant strain,
 And fortune led you well : you have the captives
 Who were the opposites of this day's strife :
 We do require them of you ; so to use them,
 As we shall find their merits and our safety
 May equally determine.

Edm. (R.H.) Sir, I thought it fit
 To send the old and miserable king

To some retention, and appointed guard ;
 Whose age has charms in it, whose title more,
 To pluck the common bosom on his side,
 And turn our impressed lancers in our eyes,
 Which do command them. With him I sent the queen ;
 My reason all the same ; and they are ready
 To-morrow, or at further space, to appear
 Where you shall hold your session.

Alb. Sir, by your patience,
 I hold you but a subject of this war,
 Not as a brother.
 And here do now arrest thee
 On capital treason.—Let the trumpet sound.
 If none appear to prove upon thy person,
 Thy heinous, manifest, and many treasons,
 There is my pledge : (*Throwing down a Gauntlet.*) I'll
 prove it on thy heart,
 Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing less
 Than I have here proclaimed thee.

Edm. There's my exchange. (*Throwing down Gauntlet.*) What in the world he is
 That names me traitor, villain-like he lies.
 Call by thy trumpet : he that dares approach,
 On him, on you, (who not?) I will maintain
 My truth and honor firmly.

Alb. A herald, ho !
 Trust to thy single virtue ; for thy soldiers,
 All levied in my name, have in my name
 Took their discharge.
 Come hither, Herald.—Let the trumpet sound,
 And read out this. (*Gives paper.*) Sound, trumpet.

(*Trumpet sounds, R.H.*)

Her. (R.H.) [Reads.] “ *If any man of quality, or degree, within the lists of the army, will maintain upon Edmund, supposed Earl of Gloster, that he is a manifold traitor, let him appear at the third sound of the trumpet. He is bold in his defence.*”

Alb. Sound ! (1st *Trumpet.*)

Her. Again ? (2d *Trumpet.*) Again ! (3d *Trumpet.*)
 (*A Trumpet answers on L.H. three times.*)

Enter EDGAR, l.h., at the end of the second sound.

Alb. (c.) Ask him his purposes, why he appears
Upon this call o' the trumpet.

Her. What are you ?
Your name, your quality ? and why you answer
This present summons ?

Edg. (l.h.) Know, my name is lost :
By treason's tooth bare-gnawn, and canker-bit ;
Yet am I noble as the adversary

I came to cope withal. *(Herald retires up.)*

Alb. (A little up Stage, in c.) Which is that adversary ?

Edg. What's he that speaks for Edmund, Earl of
Gloster ?

Edm. Himself ! what say'st thou to him ?

Edg. Draw thy sword ;
That, if my speech offend a noble heart,
Thy arm may do thee justice :—here is mine.
Behold, it is the privilege of mine honors,
My oath, and my profession. I protest—
Maugre thy strength, youth, place and eminence,
Despite thy victor sword, and fire-new fortune,
Thy valor and thy heart—thou art a traitor !
False to thy gods, thy brother, and thy father :
Conspirant 'gainst this high illustrious prince ;
And from the extremest upward of the head,
To the descent and dust beneath thy feet,
A most toad-spotted traitor. Say thou no,
This sword, this arm, and and my best spirits, are bent
To prove upon thy heart, whereto I speak,
Thou liest.

Edm. In wisdom, I should ask thy name ;
But since thy outside looks so fair and warlike,
And that thy tongue some say of breeding breathes
What safe and nicely I might well delay
By rule of knighthood, I disdain and spurn :
Back do I toss these treasons to thy head ;
With the hell-hated lie o'erwhelm thy heart ;
Which (for they yet glance by, and scarcely bruise,)
This sword of mine shall give them instant way,
Where they shall rest forever. Trumpets, speak !

(Alarums.—They fight.—Edmund falls.)

What you have charged me with, that have I done ;
 And more, much more : the time will bring it out ;
 'Tis past, and so am I.—But what art thou,
 That hast this fortune on me ? If thou art noble
 I do forgive thee.

Edg. Let's exchange charity.

I am no less in blood than thou art, Edmund :
 If more, the more thou hast wronged me.
 My name is Edgar, and thy father's son.
 The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
 Make instruments to scourge us :
 The dark and vicious place where thee he got,
 Cost him his eyes.

Alb. Where have you hid yourself ?
 How have you known the mis'ries of your father ?

Edg. By nursing them, my lord.
 The bloody proclamation to escape,
 That followed me so near, taught me to shift
 Into a madman's rags ; became his guide,
 Led him, begged for him, saved him from despair ;
 Never (oh, fault !) revealed myself unto him,
 Until some half hour past, when I was armed.
 Not sure, though hoping of this good success,
 I asked his blessing, and from first to last
 Told him my pilgrimage : but his flawed heart,
 (Alack, too weak the conflict to support !)
 'Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief,
 Burst smilingly.

Edm. (*Raised by Officers.*) I pant for life : some good
 I mean to do,
 Despite of my own nature. Quickly send—
 Be brief in it—to the castle ; for my writ
 Is on the life of Lear, and on Cordelia.

Edg. Who has the office ? Send thy token of reprieve.

Edm. Take my sword—give it the captain.

Alb. Haste thee, for thy life ! [Exit Edgar, R.H.
 The gods defend her !—Bear him hence awhile.

[*Flourish.—Edmund is led off, L.H.—Albany and
 others exeunt, R.H.*

SCENE V.—*A Prison.*

Enter LEAR, through opening in R.H. with CORDELIA, dead, in his arms.—OFFICER enters, L.H.U.E., as on guard—he remains at back, L.H.

Lear. (Advancing, c.) Howl, howl, howl, howl ! Oh, ye are men of stones !
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack.—Oh, she is gone forever !
(Lear kneels on right knee, and places Cordelia across his left, her feet towards R.H.)
I know when one is dead, and when one lives ;
She's dead as earth :—Lend me a looking-glass ;
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why, then she lives.

Enter EDGAR, ALBANY, KENT, OFFICER, and Soldiers, R.H., Officer marches the Soldiers up R.H., and back

Kent. Is this the promised end ?
Edg. Or image of that horror ? (Crosses behind Lear.)
Alb. Fall, and cease !
Lear. This feather stirs ; she lives !—If it be so,
It is a chance that does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.
Kent. (R.H.C., Kneeling.) Oh, my good master !
Lear. Pr'ythee, away !
Edg. (L.H.C.) 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.
Lear. A plague upon you, murderers, traitors, all !
I might have saved her ; now she's gone forever !
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little !—Ha !
What is't thou say'st ? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low ; but I did kill the slave
That was a-hanging thee !

Offi. (L.H., Advancing a little.) 'Tis true, my lords, he did.

Lear. Did I not, fellow ?
I have seen the day, with my good biting faulchion,
I would have made them skip : I am old now,
And these same crosses spoil me. Who are you ?
My eyes are none o' the best :—I'll tell you straight.
Kent. (R.H.C.) If fortune brag of two she loved and hated.
One of them we behold.

Lear. This is a dull sight.—Are you not Kent?

Kent. The same;

Your servant Kent.—Where is your servant Caius?

Lear. He's a good fellow; I can tell you that; He'll strike, and quickly, too:—He's dead and rotten.

Kent. No, my good lord; I am the very man.

Lear. I'll see that straight.

Kent. That, from your first of deference and decay, Have followed your sad steps.

Lear. You are welcome hither.

Kent. Nor no man else; all's cheerless, dark and deadly Your eldest daughters have foredoomed themselves, And desperately are dead.

Lear. Ay, so I think.

Kent. He knows not what he says; and vain it is That we present us to him. Oh, see! see!

Lear. And my poor fool is hanged! No, no, no life: Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,

And thou no breath at all? (*Laying Cordelia on the ground, and kneeling on both knees.*) Oh, thou wilt come no more!

Never, never, never, never!

Pray you, undo this button. (*Placing his hand on his throat, as if choking.*) Thank you, sir, Do you see this? Look on her—look—her lips—

(*Kisses her.*)

Look there—look there!

Edg. Break heart, I pr'ythee break!

(*Lear gives a convulsive gasp, and falls back. He is supported on the R.H. by Kent, and on the L.H. by Edgar.—Curtain falls to slow music.*)

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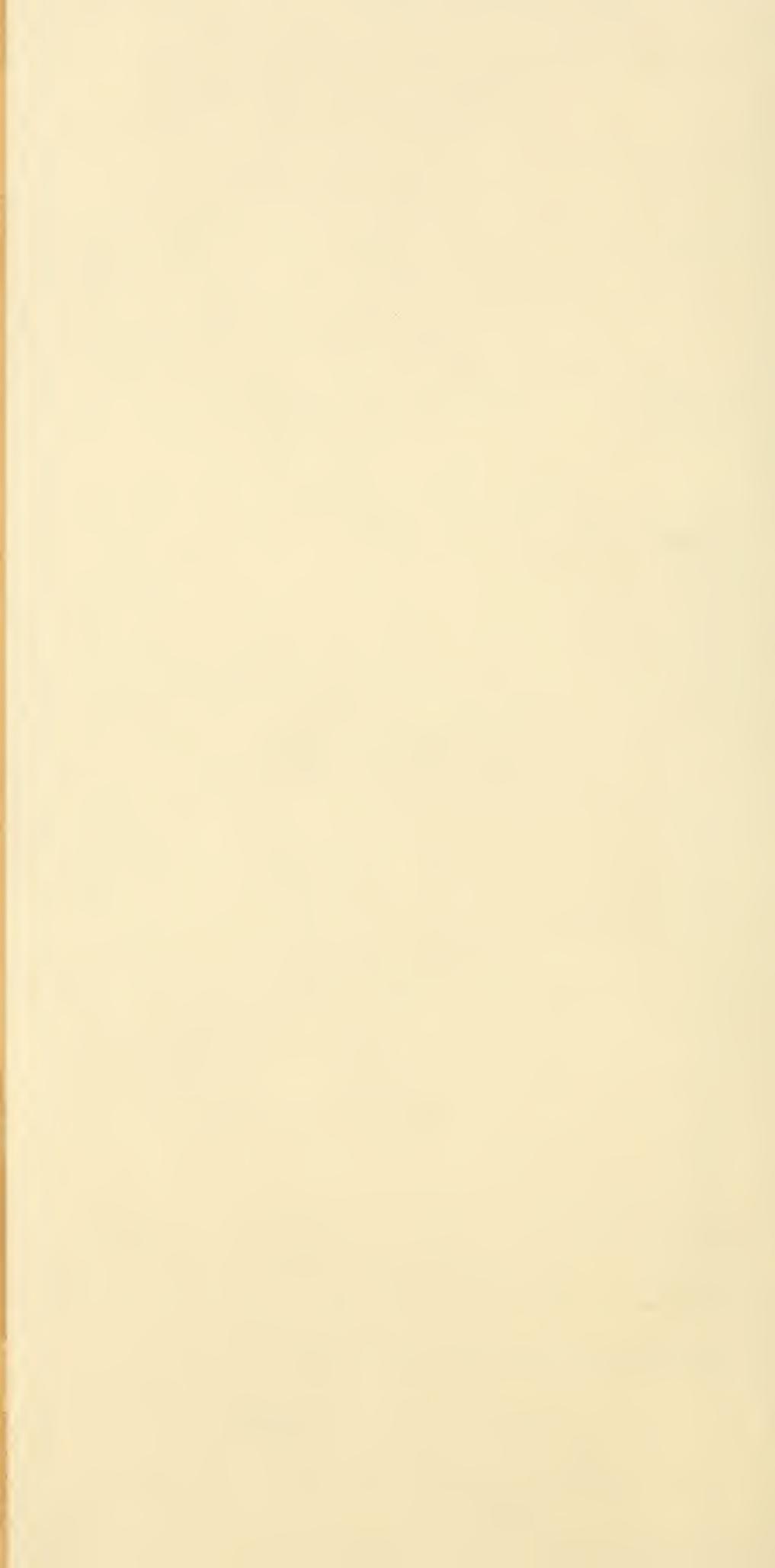
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